THE RISE OF A NEW NATIONALISM (Part 2)

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The rise of a new and essentially progressive feeling of national identity, in the widest layers of the English Canadian population, including of course the working class, is an unprecedented development in this country where all the national tasks have been completed. It is based on a new development -- the integration of the economic and social life of Canada with that of the United States, with the U.S. capitalist class in decisive control of the whole. It increasingly poses an opportunity and a challenge to revolutionary socialists who must attempt to impel the nascent, elementary anti-capitalist strivings it represents forward to socialist conclusions. It is an all encompassing problem of both theoretical and practical dimensions, which requires a judicious, collective assessment of its character with a close regard to our Marxist heritage.

The Objective Basis of the Sentiment Established by Facts, and Their Consequences

Marxism demands an analysis of objective reality to explain developments and show their dynamic. Economic relations expressed in facts and trends as they exist today between Canada and the United States and their consistency with and development from the historic trends in Canada-U.S. relations are key objective factors that must be examined.

The connection between the specific relations between Canada and the U.S. and international relations and, in addition, the bearing of international relations on Canada-U.S. relations have to be analysed to complete the picture, or, more precisely, to establish its framework and background. In short, Marxism demands a concrete, specific analysis of Canada-U.S. relations which does not contradict, but in fact harmonizes with our analysis of international development.

The facts and trends concerning economic relations between Canada and the United States are clearly established and are frequently re-affirmed in serious studies. The U.S. capitalist class easily holds decisive ownership of the commanding heights of the economy. Between 1963 and 1971 the book value of U.S. big business investment in Canada doubled, jumping from $12 billion to $24 billion. U. S. investment in Canada is larger than its total investment in Britain, the European Common Market and Japan combined. The present value is estimated to be double the book value figure. Today U.S. big business owns at least 60% of all manufacturing assets in Canada including almost 100% of the petroleum and coal industry, 93% of the rubber industry, 81% of the chemical and chemical products industry, and almost 100% of the computer industry. *(Emphasis by the Web Ed.)*

Since U.S. capital is concentrated in the most dynamic and greatest growth areas of the economy it is generally conceded that the weight of U.S. capital in the Canadian economy will continue to skyrocket merely by the re-investment of profits earned in Canada. In addition the James Bay project and the MacKenzie Valley project, both to be financed primarily by U.S. big business to the tune of $12 billion, will accelerate the process.

The Canadian capitalist class plays a secondary economic role in Canada, something that is to be expected since the U.S. capitalist class dominates the commanding heights of production. It is primarily centered in banking, transportation and service industries. Even in these areas U.S. capital has increasing weight. In addition, the boards of directors of banks which control large amounts of capital are intimately tied to U.S. big business by a network of

interlocking directorships. The influx of U.S. capital into Canada has been encouraged by the Canadian capitalist class, especially in the last few years. For instance, the president of the Royal Bank, the largest bank in Canada, frowns on what he terms economic nationalism fearing that it endangers the influx of U.S. capital from which the bank benefits.

The Canadian capitalist class has feeble assets outside of Canada. The bulk of it is actually U.S. investment with a Canadian face. In addition 80% of it is in the advanced capitalist countries, 54% in the U.S. alone, therefore giving the Canadian capitalist class little significance as an imperialist power. Of course, insofar as Canada is part of the capitalist world, it has imperialist relations with other nations. However, as an imperialist power Canada has significance only because it is part and parcel of U.S. imperialism.

These facts have brought with them consequences involving the nature of Canadian society that Marxists should recognize and study. The Canadian capitalist class, weak relative to U.S. capitalism, and unable to stop the influx of American capital, eagerly profits in its own way from the by-products of foreign investment. It now clearly plays a subservient and willing junior partner role to the U.S. capitalist class. The Canadian state, since it reflects the interests, including the imperialist interests, and power of the Canadian capitalist class, has not stood up against the flow of U.S. capital into Canada. *(Emphasis by the Web Ed.)*

Canada is a peculiar, perhaps unique country. It has a highly advanced industry with the working class organized both economically and politically against the capitalist class. At the same time it has become dominated by the world's super-capitalist power, the United States. The phrase 'imperialized imperialist' has been used to describe this situation. We find that this is a useful term to describe the Canadian economy and state.

It goes without saying that the description of Canada as an 'imperialized imperialist' country is counterposed to the view that Canada is an independent imperialist country in the same way as are for instance, France, Italy or Britain. On the other hand Canada is not a colony or a semi-colony. Most important, unlike a colonial or semi-colonial country, Canada has a highly developed industrial economy. In addition Canada achieved political independence from Britain. Only token vestiges of feudalism remain in Canada, These factors, taken as a whole, in their dialectical interrelationship indicate that Canada is not a colony or a semi-colony nor a normal or classical independent imperialist country but an imperialized imperialist country.

The main features evident today in Canada-U.S. relations, the preponderant strength of the U.S. capitalist class in the commanding heights of Canadian production, the concentration of the Canadian capitalist class in banking and transportation, the feebleness of the Canadian industrial bourgeoisie, are products of history.

Although this document is not the place to discuss fully the historical side of the problem, some general observations can be made. Since confederation or shortly after it, the Canadian bourgeoisie has consistently promoted a policy which has welcomed investment of American capital in industrial fields. This was an important ispect of the National Policy adopted in 1873 and applied in its essential aspects in a consistent way ever since. This policy was promoted by most sectors of the Canadian capitalist class — predominantly bankers, merchants, and railway moguls which benefitted from the input of capital into the economy and the resulting increase in commodity production. The result of the application of this policy is illustrated by two simple facts. In 1950 the book value of U.S. capital investment was $3.6 billion. By 1971 it had jumped to more than.$24 billion.

In the historical process of integration of the North American economy conflicts have developed. Whatever conflicts that have developed within the Canadian capitalist class over the

question of U.S. investment and control have been resolved in favor of those elements supporting further investment and the concomitant integration of the Canadian economy with the U.S. economy. These conflicts could be resolved peacefully and gradually because they did not pose the fundamental question of the class nature of society. On the other hand, in the conflicts between classes in Canadian history, including the fundamental and overriding conflict between between the capitalists and workers, the state has intervened consistently on the side of the ruling class against the working class and its allies. The conflict between the workers and the capitalists can not be resolved within the framework of capitalism since it leads, however remittently, to the overthrow of the capitalist system.

In the forseeable future, the integration of the North American economy does not imply or require the elimination of the Canadian state. The Canadian state is necessary from a capitalist point of view to subdue and discipline the Canadian workers. In addition the Canadian state serves the function of harmonizing the conflicting currents in the Canadian capitalist class, and serves to smooth the integration of the eonomy into the U.S. economy. *(Emphasis by the Web Ed.)*

The historical process of integration of the North American economy has taken place in an era that has seen the rise and consolidation of the United States as the powerhouse of world capitalism. The increasing challenge to the competitiveness of U.S. industry by other advanced capitalist countries, such as Japan and West Germany, has not reversed the process of integration. On the contrary, the U.S. capitalist class in its endeavor to remain the superpower of capitalism on a world scale — a task it is equal to — has accelerated the integration of the North American economy and the domination over Canada in order to grab more profits, resources, and markets.

The Canadian capitalist class is unable to halt or turn back the process of integration even if it wanted to because it is so completely locked into the economy and social life of the United States. Furthermore any attempt of the Canadian capitalist class to play off other capitalist nations against the United States is out of the question because all other capitalist countries, given the fact that the U.S. is the capitalist superpower, consider their relations to the U.S. as having clear priority over their relations with Canada.

Canadian nationalism, a genuine consciousness directed against capitalism as a whole

Marxism demands a close regard to the thinking and mood of the masses of people when considering all questions, including Canadian nationalism. (Note: We will use the term Canadian nationalism to refer to the developing feeling of national identity of the English Canadian population.) Canadian revolutionaries have to be able to assess what the opposition amongst wide layers of the Canadian population to U.S. ownership and control of the commanding heights of the economy represents. This is essential before an assessment of the level of consciousness, and to a large degree the direction of the radicalization, can be made. For example if the widespread sentiment against U.S. domination is essentially a false consciousness, reflecting the needs of the bourgeoisie rather than the working class, revolutionaries would have to conclude that the radicalization, which our movement has analyzed as continuing to progress until a showdown takes place, has regressed to some degree, in all sectors, including the working class. Since we believe the sentiment is genuinely anti-capitalist we will not attempt to pursue further conclusions and projections that could be drawn. We will confine our contrubution to showing the main thrust of Canadian nationalism is directed aginst the capitalist system, is advancing the radicalization, reflects the real needs of the workers and oppressed sectors, and **is firmly based in objective reality** which was analyzed in the preceeding sections.

An essential aspect of the Marxist method in this discussion is to analyse the specific and concrete attitude of the masses of Canadians; the extent of the sentiment against U.S. control,

the things that are bothering workers, students, women, etc., the actions people are taking, the political expressions of the consciousness.

Recent polls show that while people place greater emphasis on problems which clearly effect them on a day to day basis, such as inflation and unemployment, they also indicate a growing concern about U.S. control. This concern has been continually rising in the past five years.

The sentiment against U.S. control of the economy, on the horizon five years ago, today encompasses the majority of the population. Although opinion polls are only a static indication of the dynamic and puwer of the sentiment, they are valuable in snowing the extent of the sentiment.

All the polls have produced similiar results. A recent poll, conducted by Alex Murray, professor of international business at the University of Windsor, shows that 47% of the population think U.S. ownership is bad, as opposed to 38% who approve of it. 7.2% think there are good and bad aspects to it. 8% have no opinion at all. All polls including this one indicate that the sentiment is highest in B.C. and lowest in the Maritimes. This poll also indicates that the sentiment against U.S. control is almost the same in Quebec (47%) and Ontario (46%). Other polls show that the sentiment is highest among youth. A poll conducted by Peter Regenstreif in October, 1972 indicated that 58% in the age group from 18-24 favored restriction on U.S. investment, compared with 41% in the age groups over 25.

These polls have also produced data which show the relation of the opinion of the Canadian people on U.S. domination to their opinion on other issues.

The Alex Murray poll showed that people are unwilling to accept a lower standard of living for greater Canadian control of the economy, except in Ontario, the richest province where 46.6% were willing to accept it if necessary, compared to 43.9% who were not.

In relation to Quebec self-determination, Peter Regensteif's survey shows that 23% of those people in the 18-24 age bracket favor more independence for Quebec, compared to 13% over 25; 16% of youth (18-24) favor less independence, compared to 15% over 25; and 57% of youth think things should stay as they are, compared to 61% over 25. This tends to indicate that parallel to growing opposition to U.S. control of the Canadian economy among youth, there has been a modest increase in sympathy among English Canadian youth toward the nationalist aspirations of the Québécois.

Peter Regenstreif's poll also shows that people have become increasingly critical of the U.S. in general at the same time as they have increasingly opposed U.S. investment. 18% of youth (18-24) and 18% of those over 25 have become more favorable toward the U.S. in the last few years; 56% of youth and 35% of those over 25 have become less favorable; 19% of youth and 38% of those over 25 have remained the same; and 7% of youth and 9% of those over 25 are not sure.

The Alex Murray poll showed that of those who oppose U.S. investment, 35% do so because they believe Americans are "taking over out economy and Canada/Canadians should control their own business/economy"; 29% feel that profits/money leave the country, this doesn't benefit Canada, and the U.S. "profits from our resources." Only 0.7% believe U.S. control brings undesirable unions and unions that want wage parity with the U.S.

Finally a Gallup poll showed that 40% "disapprove of the way the Federal government is responding to U.S. control of our industry and natural resources". 34% approved. 25% were

undecided. (The polls we used were Gallup Poll, *Toronto Star* Sept. 23, 1972; Peter Regenstreif poll, *Toronto Star,* Oct. 28, 1972; Alex Murray poll, *Toronto Star,* Dec 30, 1972.)

These polls tend to confim what our movement has met with in its work. The sentiment is highest in the most radicalzied sector of the population -- youth. It has arisen concurrently to widespread opposition ot foreign policies of the U.S., especially the war in Vietnam, and abhorence of domestic policies and conditions within the United States. The growing opposition to U.S. control has been accompanied by a growing disenchantment with the Liberals, the party in power, and the Conservatives which, rather than opposing U.S. takeover of the econom have identified with it and promoted it. At the same time, the NDP and especially the Waffle, formerly in the NDP, have received a hearing because of their expressed concern for (and, in the case of Waffle which stands for an independent socialist Canada), outright opposition to the U.S. big business takeover. The sentiment, while arising somewhat later than the upsurge of Québécois nationalism in this present radicalization, has nevertheless paralleled it in the last five years and to a modest extent reinforced it. The sentiment has also paralleled the rise of working class militancy and consciousness. *(Emphasis by the Web Ed.)*

Opposition to the increasing domination of the Canadian economy by U.S. big business and to Washington's arrogant contempt for the fears of Canadian workers and students was powerfully expressed in the mass demonstrations against the Amchitka nuclear test off the West coast of Canada in the fall of 1971. Although people came into the struggle with a variety of concerns -- such as pollution, tidal waves, destruction of animal life, earthquakes -- the actions right across Canada were directed against the U.S. government. The U.S. government went ahead with the blast despite the dangers and opposition from Canadians. The Trudeau government was subject to considerable pressure for its failure to take a stand. Only a last minute token protest to Nixon which in the end wasn't even actually sent to him, got Trudeau and the Liberal party off the hook in the popular mind.

Naturally since Nixon and the U.S. government were responsible for the blast and ignored the will of the vast majority of Canadians, the upsurge was directed against the U.S. government, Supreme Court and President. In one town in B.C. thousands of workers cheered as Nixon was burned in effigy. Students aqross the country marched to border-crossings to symbolically block the U.S. out of Canada.

At the same time the actions took on a pro-Canada character. Canadian flags were carried and welcomed. People sang "Oh Canada", often with fists in the air, at the climax of many rallies and teach-ins.

A sizeable minority of people saw the connection between the nuclear test and the war in Vietnam, and also between Washington and Ottawa allied in the U.S.-dominated military alliance NORAD which was the organisation which sponsored the blast. A significant number saw that Trudeau, by being reluctant to issue a strong protest, in reality endorsed the blast which endangered the cities, enviornment. and lives of Canadians. Of all the major parties, the NDP stood out most prominently in opposition to the blast.

Since the historic Amchitka actions, there have been a number of smaller, although highly significant protests involving the issues of American control, and Canadian nationalism, most of which are not within the scope of this document. It is important to note one developing protest however. Since early this spring, the MacKenzie pipeline deal has come under fire from various angles. Some individuals and groups fear widespread ecological and environmental damages. Others object to the enormous profits that will be made by U.S. big business. Indians and Eskimos are protesting that it will destroy much of their homeland, livihood, and

tradition. Many economists fear that the large input of capital in the building of the pipeline will send inflation skyrocketing. The NDP and many labor unions point out that it will produce little permanent employment after construction is completed.

Similiar to the Amchitka actions, the direction of these protests is against the U.S. government, U.S. big business, the Canadian government, and Canadian big business. This is logical. The U.S. government, through its vast network of leverage and contact points with the Canadian government, is attempting to build up the stock of resources and power to be put at the command of U.S. industry. U.S. big business is financing and controlling the project.. The Canadian government is promoting the plan. Finally, Canadian big business, integrated into the whole project on a minority basis of course, is also responsible.

It is important to note that opposition to U.S. control exists in innumerable ways and at various levels of consciousness. Many students oppose the almost exclusive use of American text books; as well, many oppose U.S. big business 's considerable control over university functioning, like research which is more than often directed by the Pentagon toward military purposes. Many people resent the deluge of American shows and advertisements which bombard television networks. Even people who are aware of the ingrained racism against Indians and Québécois in Canada, fear the more blatant racism of U.S. society will worsen and spread the racism already present in Canada. Workers who oppose their bureaucratic trade union leadership, in the struggle for union democracy see their leadership as an extension of the international leadership in the U.S. and increasingly tend to think in terms of Canadian trade union autonomy. Opposition to U.S. domination, constantly arising over issues big and small and encompasing the majority of the Canadian population, has become **one of the central realities of political life in Canada.**

The Rise of a New Canadian Nationalism

For Marxists, more is required than to indicate the direction that protests and demonstrations are going. Side by side with a growing resentment and struggle against domination, exploitation or oppression, there arises a feeling of common goals, self-identity and collective pride. In working class struggles against the bosses, class consciousness and militancy reaches a high. The steady increase in protests of women against the exploitations and oppression they face has propelled sisterhood forward. The protests of the Black people in the United States and the Québécois in Quebec have propelled forward powerful nationalist feelings.

In Canada, in respnnse to U.S. domination, a Canadian nationalism distinguished by a positive democratic spirit, self-respect, and resentment ooward domination has arisen. This is probably the only time in Canadian history, certainly in recent history, that any form of Canadian nationalism has evoked a response from broad sectors of the population, including the working class. For years, up until the late '60s, Canadians except for the Québécois and native population, viewed themselves either in a pro-British or pro-American light. Up until February, 1965 there was not even a distinctive Canadian flag. Until then the official emblem was the Red Ensign which featured the Union Jack. Until January 1947 there was no such thing as a Canadian. People living in Canada were legally British subjects. By the 1970s what can only be called Canadian nationalism has become widespread.

In 1968, our movement drew attention to the growing opposition to U.S. domination which it characterized in a resolution adopted in the convention as an anti-imperialism sentiment developing towards an anti-capitalist consciousness. At that time we said it had nothing in

common with what could be called bourgeois nationalism which stands for the defense of bourgeois property, its imperialist holdings, and stands in the way of the development of class consciousness of the workers. Today in Canada we see that opposition to U.S. domination has transcended an anti-imperialist sentiment. It has broadened and become more complex. It has promoted the growth of a nationalism of quite the opposite character to bourgeois nationalism. This nationalism is democratic in character. It is a nationalism that expresses a desire for popular rule, represents the needs of the whole people, reflects the aspirations of people for liberty and equality, and is directed against the Canadian capitalist class which stands in its way.

The literature produced around the theme of Canadian nationalism since 1968 is immense. For the first time we can almost visualize the development of a distinctive English Canadian culture parallel to the continuing development of the Québécois culture. For a description of the thinking developing in widening layers of the English Canadian population at this time we note the thoughts of the radical novelist, poet, literary critic, feminist and Canadian nationalist Margaret Atwood. In one essay she writes:

"I don't think Canada is 'better' than any other place, any more than I think Canadian literature is 'better'; I live in one and read the other for a simple reason: they are mine, with all the sense of territory that implies. Refusing to acknowledge where you come from -- and that must include the noodle man and his hostilities, the anti-nationalist lady and her doubts — is an act of amputation: you may become free floating, a citizen of the world (and in what other country is that an ambition?) but only at the cost of arms, legs or heart. By discovering your place you discover your self.

"But there's another image, fast, coming from the outside that I have to fit in. This territory, this thing I have called 'mine', may not be mine much longer. Part of the much- sought Canadian identity is that few nationals have done a more enthusiastic job of selling their country than have Canadians. Of course there are buyers willing to exploit, as they say, our resources; there always are. It is our eagerness to sell that needs attention. Exploiting resources and developing potential are two different things: one is done from without, by money, the other from within, by something I hesitate only for a moment to call love." (*Maclean's,* January, 1973; "Expatriatism as Amputation.")

In a more academic although similiar vein, four professors from Dalhousie University concluded their long study on the rip-off and destruction of resources by saying:

"What importance is legislative control. We're not interested in.transferring the remnants of a Canadian economy from Wall Street's control to Bay Street's. Canada is losing rivers, shorelines, valleys — tangible physical resources. If we don't establish economic and environmental control, there'll be nothing left worth owning."

If the revolution could be achieved by mere repetition of formulas and concepts, Marxist truisms, our task would be easy. However reality is much more complicated and challenging. An essentially progressive, democratic sentiment which our movement should not shy from calling nationalism is now with us awaiting our response.

Canadian Nationalism, and Opposition to U.S. Domination Directed Against Capitalism

The radicalization that has been sweeping across Canada has proceeded from the most varied range of issues stemming from capitalism -- from the most catastrophic struggles like the war in Vietnam to valid protests against enforced hair styles and rigid dress codes; from depressed wages and alienating conditions in the factories to disillusionment and rejection of

liberalism among many students. The common characteristic of practically all issues is their direction toward the rejection of the capitalist system, the capitalist class, and the state.

The growing opposition to U.S. domination over the economic and social life of Canada, which is expressed in nationalist terms among the masses, is proceeding on a similiar course. From a wide range of issues Canadian workers, women, students, unemployed, are seeing that U.S. domination, more specifically U.S. big business, U.S. capitalism, is a major problem. In the process they are finding that the Canadian capitalist class is a willing, eager partner of the U.S. capitalist class, and in fact has no independent character apart from it, in appearance or in reality. In fact they are moving against the specific and concrete nature of capitalism in Canada which, similiar to capitalism in general, exploits workers, induces unemployment, promotes imperialist wars, oppresses women, the Québécois, etc. Because of the integrated character of the North American economy, dominated by U.S. big business, they are in fact moving against capitalism as it exists.

Because Canadian nationalism is a genuine expression of anti-capitalist consciousness, it leads people toward drawing correct conclusions about the Canadian capitalist class and the class nature of the Canadian state. Because Canadian nationalism is directed against capitalism, bourgeois ideologists like Kierans, Gordon and the publishers of the *Toronto Star* will have very little success in attempting to divert Canadian nationalism against the Québécois, toward patriotic acceptance of the Canadian capitalist class, or toward wage controls. Because the main thrust of Canadian nationalism is anti-capitalist, the NDP will probably continue to give voice to the sentiment, and gain support from workers, students, etc. by doing so. The LSA/LSO must recognize the sentiment's anti-capitalist thrust and seek to draw it toward more explicit anti-capitalist conclusions,

It goes without saying that Canadian nationalism is not "pure" all anti-capitalist and nothing else. Like any other consciousness that takes roots in the masses, it can not be free from contradictory elements. The task is not to point out only reactionary aspects of it which we will combat, like anti-Québécois feelings, that are usually an inheritance of the past. Similiarly, the task should not be to point out only progressive aspects of it. The challenge before our movement, after recognizing its contradictory character is to attempt to establish its essential nature, that is its main thrust. We are attempting to show in this discussion that the growth of Canadian nationalism, a new phenomenon arising over the same time as the acceleration of U.S; investment in Canada, is directed, as shown by polls, actions, and protests, against capitalism as a whole. This is occurring because of the integrated character of the North American economy dominated by U.S. big business.

The Transitional Approach

Are we obliged to formulate a full program for propaganda and action to meet the sentiment?

No. Not at this time. A cool, calm and measured investigation of any new phenomenon is the first requirement of Marxism. We are not first required to project a movement or a set of new programmatic proposals. Our movement may, it is not excluded, be able to meet the challenge that the sentiment poses without developing any new programmatic concepts.

The crucial requirement from the point of view of the transitional method, after the objective reality has been analysed, is not the projection of a course of action or series of programmatic proposals but the correct assessment of the consciousness of the masses —the framework of our activity. If we can not agree on the existence of a new, essentially progressive

Canadian nationalism, arguments about program and action for this sentiment are just chaff that fogs up the discussion. Because disagreements do exist on this score, conflicting views on how we should intervene and lead the present consciousness to revolutionary conclusions will continue to develop on a day to day basis throughout all our movement's work.

This is why the settling of this fundamental disagreement is so important for the Canadian section.